

13 JUN 1962

Honorable Joel T. Broyhill
House of Representatives
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Broyhill:

This is in reply to your letter of 29 June 1962 to Mr. McCone with regard to the possibility of furnishing assistance to the McLean Volunteer Fire Department.

We agree wholeheartedly that this fine organization has provided excellent service, both fire fighting equipment and use of ambulance, whenever the Central Intelligence Agency has had to call on it.

We have made a thorough search of our authorities in order to ascertain if a means exists by which this Agency might properly render financial assistance to the McLean Fire Department. We regret that we have found no such authorization. On the contrary, the Comptroller General, in a decision reported at 26 Comp. Gen. 382, prohibits the use of appropriated funds in payment for fire protection services provided the Federal Government by a local volunteer fire department. The situation there involved the Navy Department's proposal to contract with a Montgomery County Volunteer Fire Department for fire protection for its David Taylor Model Basin at Carderock, Maryland.

The Comptroller General's decision would appear to be in accord with your statement that the McLean Fire Department, under existing regulations, cannot and does not wish to charge for its services. We feel the decision would be no different in the case of a donation since a gift of Federal funds, regardless of the Comptroller General's decision would require the specific authorization of the Congress.

We regret that we are unable to give you a more favorable reply and assure you that our failure to do so does not stem from a lack of appreciation of the services provided by the McLean Volunteer Fire Department.

We cannot, of course, state what the Secretary of Defense (Civil Defense) or the General Services Administration may or may not do to assist with the problem, pursuant to whatever special authorities they may have. However, we are following up on your letter with the request that all possible assistance be accorded the McLean Volunteer Fire Department consistent with their existing authority.

Sincerely,

Lawrence R. Houston
Lawrence R. Houston
General Counsel

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